

Tracey J. Eide

Washington State Senator • 30th Legislative District



2006 Session Update

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Leadership:

Senate floor leader

Committees:

Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education;
International Trade & Economic
Development; Rules; Transportation

Other Legislative Committees:

Federal Way Advancing Leadership Youth
Advisory Board (current); Joint Select
Committee on Health Disparities (current);
Member of the Washington State School
Safety Advisory Committee (current);
Washington State Community Economic
Revitalization Board (current); Joint Select
Committee on Secondary Education (current);
Member, Title and Registration Advisory
Committee (current); Joint Select Committee
on Education Restructuring; Chair, National
Telematics Committee, National Conference
of State Legislatures; Member, Legislative
Transportation Committee (current); Member,
Washington State Recycling Task Force; Co-
Chair, Commute Trip Reduction Task Force;
Alternate Member, Council State Government,
Western Water Policy Committee; PTA and
dedicated school volunteer for more than a
decade; Former Board Member, King County
Disability and Retirement Board for Police
and Firefighters; Federal Way Human
Services Commission, 1993-98;
Chair 1997-98

**Legislative
Highlights
Inside**

Spring 2006

Dear Neighbors,

This session, the Legislature made unprecedented accomplishments and truly served Washington's citizens. We crafted a responsible budget that saves more than \$900 million for a rainy day, \$275 million of which will be deposited into an account for public education. We made crucial investments in public safety, education and business. I am also pleased we improved funding for programs that help our seniors and families in need.

The highlight list includes:

- Eliminating the \$5-a-day parking fee at our state parks.
- Providing \$56 million in targeted tax cuts.
- Strengthening penalties for sex offenders.
- Encouraging farmers to produce biofuels and other forms of renewable energy.
- Cracking down on methamphetamine manufacturing.
- Helping students pass the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL).
- Toughening laws on drunk driving.
- Overhauling the state's unemployment insurance system.
- Reaching a landmark compromise on medical malpractice.

Inside, you will find more details about what the 2006 legislative session means for you.

It is truly an honor and pleasure to continue serving you.

Sincerely,

Tracey J. Eide
State Senator
30th Legislative District

Budget Highlights



As a long-time supporter of policies and services that benefit our seniors, I was pleased to secure \$20,000 for the Pacific-Algonia Senior Center. I'm pictured here with two seniors at a check presentation ceremony at the Center. Auburn Mayor Joe Scholz and Pacific Mayor Richard Hildreth are in the background.

Pacific-Algonia Senior Center

\$20,000

This organization provides meals to low-income seniors. Last year, it served almost 10,000 people.

Financial Literacy Public Private Partnership

\$50,000

Woodstone Credit Union has done a wonderful job educating students in the Federal Way public schools about the importance of financial planning. In 2004 the Washington Credit Union League led support for legislation that created the Financial Literacy Public Private Partnership. The partnership helps students learn about checking and savings accounts, paying bills, credit cards, loan applications and insurance policies.

This funding will help ensure our students' continued access to this valuable resource. Several private organizations are expected to provide matching funds now that the state has made an appropriation.

Law Enforcement Academies

\$850,000

Law enforcement academies train the police officers who help keep our communities and roads safe. Around the state there is a shortage of qualified public safety officers. This one-time funding will begin to ease that shortage and will help Federal Way with its need for additional officers.

Locking Up Sex Offenders

\$52 million

This appropriation funds mandatory, long-term prison sentences for sex offenders as well as services for victims.

Digital Learning Commons

\$1.5 million

The Digital Learning Commons (DLC) gives students, parents and teachers from around the state access to high-quality digital resources, learning tools and online classes. I am particularly impressed with how it helps students to plan and prepare for college. The Federal Way Internet Academy, the centerpiece of the DLC, will receive a portion of this money. Visit the DLC: <http://www.hewlett.org/Programs/Education/Technology/K-12+Sector/DLC.htm>.

Community Action Agencies

\$1 million

The South King County Multi-Service Center is one of 31 Community Action Agencies in Washington that provide services to low-income individuals and families in need. Their aim is to help people and families become more self-sufficient and move out of poverty.

Han Woo-Ri, Northwest Korean Sports and Cultural Fair

\$25,000

Last year, more than 5,000 attended the Han Woo-Ri Festival in Federal Way, which hosted more than 80 performers and athletes from Korea and nearly 200 regional participants. With more than 10,000 Korean-Americans in Federal Way—and 25,000 in King County—the festival is an important cultural, economic, social and civic event.



Incident response vehicles help clear accidents and aid motorists to reduce traffic hazards and backups. Five additional vehicles will provide service along I-5 in south King County.

Incident Response Vehicles

\$820,000. Highways in our area are at or above capacity. Accidents or stalled vehicles can cause miles of backup and long delays. This money will fund five additional vehicles to provide service along I-5 and State Route 18 in south King County.

Major Accomplishments

Tougher penalties for sex offenders

Protecting our children is a top priority of mine and one of government's most important responsibilities. The Legislature passed a package of bills that:

- Increase minimum sentences to 25 years for predatory and violent sex offenses against children;
- Improve community notification procedures;
- Tighten registration requirements and monitoring of registered sex offenders and increase penalties for those who do not comply;
- Increase penalties for so-called "precursor crimes" such as voyeurism, possession of child pornography and using the Internet to "groom" a minor; and
- Improve public education—particularly for young children—about avoiding victimization.

Continuing the crackdown on drunk drivers

To protect citizens from chronic drunk drivers, we increased a driving under the influence (DUI) conviction to a class C felony if the offender has four or more prior offenses within 10 years or has ever been convicted of vehicular homicide or vehicle assault while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The court must order the offender to undergo treatment during incarceration.

Giving students the tools to succeed

We are holding students to higher standards than ever before. We also need to make sure we are giving them the tools they need to meet those standards. After seeing the success of a program used by the Franklin Pierce School District, I



I'm with Gov. Gregoire (seated) and Attorney General Rob McKenna (far right) at a bill signing ceremony for Senate Bill 6325, which will increase prison time for people committing sex crimes.

sponsored legislation to expand the program. Senate Bill 6255 gives local school districts the opportunity to start student-centered planning and mentoring programs of their own.

The key to this program is that students, parents and teachers work together to chart a course for the student's academic year. Students lead annual conferences with their parents and a mentor-teacher to discuss class selections, post-high school plans and other topics. The school district then designs its annual class schedule after students select their classes.

For many years I have had the pleasure of being a mentor at Truman High School and have seen the positive results firsthand. Students do better when they have someone watching out for them. Schools that have used this kind of planning and mentoring program have fewer students failing and more students taking advanced math and science classes. Every student recently graduating from Truman was headed off to higher education. This program works!

Commute Trip Reduction

The Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) is an outstanding program linking the business and environmental communities. I sponsored Senate Bill 6566 to further improve the CTR program. Businesses participating

in CTR encourage their employees to explore alternative ways to get to work such as buses, vanpools, carpools, biking or walking. Businesses then get a tax credit.

Some 800 businesses and more than 560,000 employees in 10 counties participate in CTR. This program has reduced traffic and air pollution as well as our dependence on gas and oil. In central Puget Sound, CTR has resulted in 14,200 fewer vehicle trips each

weekday morning. The governor has signed the bill into law.

Helping families of officers killed in the line of duty

Firefighters and police officers keep us safe and I believe we need to do the same for their families. This session I sponsored Senate Bill 6723, which provides health insurance to surviving spouses and children of police officers and firefighters killed in the line of duty.

Renee Maher testified in favor of the measure. She is the widow of Federal Way Officer Patrick Maher, who was slain while in uniform. Renee told me that she was concerned that some surviving spouses don't have coverage for themselves and their children. I believed this was an issue that the Legislature should address. In passing my bill, the Legislature did the right thing for the most deserving of families.

Home-heating assistance

Having the first bill signed into law this session meant that help was on the way for individuals and families struggling to pay their energy bills. The House version of the measure I sponsored, Senate Bill 6285, provides \$7.6 million to the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. The state was awarded this sum from a lawsuit. An average payment of \$350 gave real relief to many of our neighbors.

OTHER NEWS

Intermediate Driver's License saves lives

Vehicle collisions are the leading cause of death for Washington's citizens aged 15-20. Fatal teen crashes occur at more than double the rate for all other drivers combined.

During the 2000 legislative session, I prime-sponsored legislation that created the Intermediate Driver's License (IDL) program. Sixteen-year-olds licensed under the IDL program are involved in 48 percent fewer fatal and serious-injury accidents compared to teens licensed before IDL.

Hands-Free Cell Phones

For the past eight years, I have fought to keep our families and friends safer on the road by requiring drivers to use hands-free cell phones. This session, we got closer to that goal when my measure, Senate Bill 5160, passed out of the Senate and the House Transportation Committee. Many of you called my office with horror stories about people driving while talking on their cell phones. Your stories have convinced more of my colleagues of how important this bill is to public safety. But the bill stalled when it didn't get a vote by the full House.

Next year I'll be back with the bill. We're seeing a nationwide trend with major companies such as General Motors and

Exxon prohibiting their employees from talking on cell phones while driving company vehicles. Military bases are implementing regulations that prohibit drivers from talking on hand-held cell phones (hands-free devices are exempt) unless the driver is safely parked. With medical studies reporting that driving while talking on a cell phone is the equivalent to driving drunk, I'm not giving up the fight.

Eminent Domain

Many of you have concerns about the use of eminent domain, or powers that governments have to condemn and take private properties. A case in Connecticut brought the matter into the national spotlight when eminent domain was used to transfer private property to the government for the purpose of economic development. This is not likely to occur in Washington because Article 1, Section 16 of the State Constitution prohibits the taking of private land for private economic development. Also, our state Supreme Court has ruled against condemnation for the purpose of promoting economic development.

This is a serious issue of governmental power. I pledge to you that I will work for passage of any legislation necessary to ensure that our constitutional rights are not threatened.

Senate Pages Sponsored by Senator Eide This Session



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Legislative Report

